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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 09/09/09

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ARTICLES:

- (1) Sankei-FNN poll on Aso cabinet, political parties, election results

Questions & Answers

(Note) Figures are percentages. Figures in parentheses are percentages in the previous Sankei-FNN survey, conducted Aug. 22-23.

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 14.9 (22.2)
No 76.4 (67.9)
Don't know (D/K), etc. 8.7 (9.9)

Q: Which political party do you support?

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 39.7 (36.0)
Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 18.5 (26.1)
New Komeito (NK) 5.0 (4.9)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 3.9 (2.4)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 2.5 (1.5)
Your Party (YP or Minna no To) 3.6 (1.9)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.6 (0.4)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.3 (0.1)
Other political parties 0.9 (0.8)
None 24.4 (24.4)
D/K, etc. 0.6 (1.4)

Q: DPJ President Hatoyama is expected to become the next prime

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minister. Do you have high expectations for him?

Yes 63.8
No 31.6
D/K, etc. 4.6

Q: Do you think the number of seats the LDP won in the recent election for the House of Representatives is too small?

Yes 48.9
No 45.9
D/K, etc. 5.2

Q: Do you think Mr. Hatoyama and Mr. Ozawa have fulfilled their public accountability on their political donation issues?

Yes 15.0
No 76.3
D/K, etc. 8.7

Q: What do you think is the primary reason for the DPJ's victory in the election?

High expectations for DPJ President Hatoyama 6.3
High expectations for individual candidates' political stances 5.6
High expectations for the DPJ's manifesto 29.2
Criticism of the ruling parties' policies or political stances 52.8
D/K, etc. 6.1

Q: What do you think is the primary reason for the LDP's defeat in the election?

Judgments or words of Prime Minister Aso 29.5
Judgments or words of Prime Minister Aso's predecessors 19.5
Individual candidates' political stances 10.3
Rating for the LDP's performance 28.9
The LDP's manifesto of public pledges 6.4
D/K, etc. 5.3

Q: Do you think the LDP should have elected its new president before voting to elect the prime minister?

Yes 55.1
No 28.4

D/K, etc. 16.5

Q: Do you think the LDP should push for a generational change?

Yes 85.1

No 9.2

D/K, etc. 5.7

Q: Do you think the LDP will come back to run the government?

Yes 68.1

No 18.9

D/K, etc. 13.0

Q: Who do you think would be most appropriate now as Japan's prime minister among the following politicians in the ruling and opposition parties?

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Taro Aso 1.6 (4.5)

Shigeru Ishiba 5.5 (3.1)

Nobuteru Ishihara 4.9 (4.9)

Koichi Kato 1.0 (---)

Sadakazu Tanigaki 1.6 (---)

Kunio Hatoyama 3.0 (---)

Yoshimasa Hayashi 0.3 (---)

Yoichi Masuzoe 13.1 (16.5)

Other LDP lawmakers 2.2 (---)

Katsuya Okada 8.4 (7.9)

Ichiro Ozawa 5.2 (5.5)

Naoto Kan 2.6 (3.9)

Yukio Hatoyama 22.6 (13.3)

Other lawmakers 3.6 (---)

None 19.8 (17.7)

D/K, etc. 4.6 (3.5)

Q: What kind of government would you like to see now?

DPJ's single-party government 18.6

DPJ-led coalition government 35.1

DPJ-LDP grand coalition government 38.1

D/K, etc. 8.2

Q: Would you like the ruling or opposition parties to win next year's election for the House of Councillors?

DPJ and other new ruling parties 59.1

LDP and other new opposition parties 33.0

D/K, etc. 7.9

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted Sept. 5-6 by the Sankei Shimbun and Fuji News Network (FNN) over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. For the survey, a total of 1,000 persons were sampled from among men and women, aged 20 and over, across the nation.

(2) U.S. Ambassador to Japan visits Kanagawa governor and Yokohama mayor

KANAGAWA SHIMBUN (Page 4) (Full)
September 8, 2009

Taiki Mano, Ayano Endo

U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos visited the Kanagawa prefectural government building and the Yokohama city government building on September 7. He held separate meetings with Governor Shigefumi Matsuzawa and Mayor Fumiko Hayashi, exchanging views with them on issues relating to U.S. military bases in Japan and the APEC meeting to be held in Yokohama next year. According to the Kanagawa prefectural government, this is the first time that Ambassador Roos has met with Japanese local government leaders since he arrived in Japan in August.

During his meeting with the Ambassador at the prefectural government

building, Governor Matsuzawa said: "I will be visiting the U.S. with Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima in November to meet with senior officials of the Departments of State and Defense. I would like to propose the conclusion of special environmental agreements for U.S. military bases." Roos responded, "President Obama also has a strong interest in the environment. Let me study this issue carefully,"

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demonstrating a positive stance.

The Ambassador reportedly said to the governor, "You used to be a Democratic Party of Japan Diet member. I look forward to your advice on Japan-U.S. relations and security issues under the DPJ administration."

Roos met Mayor Hayashi at the Yokohama city government building and talked about the importance of social participation by women and APEC. Hayashi told him that "we will be ready with warm hospitality from all Yokohama citizens and thorough security measures through cooperation with the relevant authorities" for APEC.

The ambassador reported said that the mayor should contact him if she has any requests regarding military base issues and economic cooperation.

(3) Kanagawa Governor Matsuzawa meets U.S. Ambassador Roos, requests meetings to review SOFA during November trip to U.S.

NIKKEI (Page 2) (2009)
September 8, 2009

Kanagawa Governor Shigefumi Matsuzawa met U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos, who arrived in Japan in August, on September 7. He asked for meetings with members of the U.S. Congress and senior Department of Defense officials in order to request a review of the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) during his visit to the U.S. in November. The Ambassador replied that he will work positively to arrange for the meetings.

Matsuzawa serves as the chair of the liaison council of governors of prefectures hosting U.S. military bases. He asked Roos about the possibility of holding an annual "liaison meeting" between the liaison council and the Japanese and U.S. governments. He also reiterated his proposal on concluding special agreements for environmental conservation on U.S. bases between the two countries.

Ambassador Roos also met Yokoyama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi on the same day. The mayor requested the early return of U.S. military facilities in the city and exchanged views with Roos on the APEC summit to be held in Yokohama next year.

(4) In meeting with U.S. Ambassador Roos, Kanagawa governor proposes a forum for discussion of "environment accord"

ASAHI, Kanagawa Edition (Page 29) (Full)
September 8, 2009

U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos, who arrived at his post in August, met on Sept. 7 with Kanagawa Prefecture Gov. Shigefumi Matsuzawa. The two informally exchanged views on such issues as the Japan-U.S. relationship and the U.S. base issue.

After the meeting, the Ambassador said, "We had a productive discussion for building amicable bilateral ties." According to Matsuzawa, who responded to interview requests, he asked Roos to set up a forum for discussion of the conclusion of an "environment special agreement," which would specify local governments' involvement should the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement be revised and in case contaminants are discovered at U.S. military facilities in Japan.

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In the meeting, Matsuzawa also proposed the continuation of the

liaison council on the bases issue. Roos reportedly took a positive stance toward the governor's proposals.

According to Matsuzawa, Roos, referring to the Democratic Party of Japan's taking over the reins of government following its landslide victory in the Aug. 30 House of Representatives election, asked him how the DPJ administration will handle issues bearing on Japan-U.S. relations.

The Ambassador also met with Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi. The two reportedly discussed the base issue and economic cooperation between Yokohama and U.S. cities. "Yokohama hopes to build close relations with the United States through the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo," Hayashi commented.

(5) Hatoyama article elicits positive reaction? Hopes for change in interaction with U.S.

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 24) (Full)
September 5, 2009

An article by Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama was reprinted in part by a U.S. newspaper, and this has given rise to a controversy on his alleged "breaking away from the U.S." While this affair has quieted down since his teleconference with U.S. President Barack Obama and meeting with U.S. Ambassador John Roos, there has also been some positive reaction by people opining that "there is nothing wrong with expressing one's opinion in diplomacy." Some people are hoping for change in "diplomatic tone deaf" Japan.

The article in question appeared in the online edition of The New York Times on August 27. The original in Japanese was contributed by Hatoyama to the September edition of the monthly magazine Voice. Excerpts from this article were translated into English and reprinted. Significant portions of the original were excerpted, and the controversy came about after the Japanese media reported the reaction of the U.S. media and other concerned parties.

This article includes such passages as "If we look back on the changes in Japanese society since the end of the Cold War... the global economy has damaged traditional economic activities and destroyed local communities" and "Another national goal that emerges from the concept of fraternity is the creation of an East Asian community. Passages of this sort have been interpreted as an indication of Japan's "breaking away from the U.S."

However, it is doubtful if the Obama administration considers the article to be a criticism, since the Obama administration itself was born from the criticism of neo-liberalism and America itself is pursuing multilateralism rather than U.S. unilateralism.

In any case, some American experts on Japan are baffled by the fuss over this article. Professor Ronni Alexander of Kobe University's Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies says, "The mass media made too much of a fuss. President Obama probably thinks that some criticism is inevitable. It is common practice to voice various opinions in political debate."

The new DPJ administration is likely to have difficulty grappling

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with such issues as the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station in its relations with the U.S. However, Alexander points out that "the Japanese are not good at 'negating somebody's opinion but not negating that person.' They are unable to conduct constructive discussions out of fear of criticism. America is a society where you have to argue loudly on a daily basis. I think Japan overreacted in this case."

Yuji Kitamaru, a journalist based in New York, thinks that on the contrary, the Obama administration probably welcomes the Hatoyama article. This is because the U.S. Democratic Party emphasizes human rights and the environment, so it "values just causes and ideals rather than getting things done surreptitiously."

"To think that the Obama administration regarded the Hatoyama article as offensive and impudent is off the mark," he says. "Diplomacy is based on discussions, so criticism and argument are inevitable. The Obama administration, which knows little about Mr. Hatoyama and the DPJ, probably welcomes the article as a good sign since he first tossed the ball in the game of catch it desires to play with Japan."

Kitamaru also points out an issue with the Japanese side: "Diplomacy under the old Liberal Democratic Party administration consisting mostly of heeding the United States' wishes has given rise to the problem of the secret nuclear agreement. The U.S. has also been troubled by the gap between tatemae (public stance) and honne (true intent)."

What should the DPJ administration do, then, to realize a "close and equal Japan-U.S. alliance relationship"? Kitamaru argues that Japan should clarify what it can and cannot do as a sovereign country and present concrete proposals.

He further explains that "this means that Japan should assert its position on what it can do for the elimination of nuclear arms, and on the Afghan issue (tell the U.S. that) while it cannot continue the refueling mission or deploy the Self-Defense Forces, here are the things it can do in terms of civilian support. A true partner should not follow the U.S. blindly, but should work together with the U.S. What is needed is aggressive diplomacy."

(6) Letter to the Editor - Concerned about possible effects of American newspaper's criticism

ASAHI (Page8) (Abridged slightly)
September 6, 2009

The Sept. 1 editorial of the Washington Post reportedly described Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama as an "inexperienced politician," while indicating that "it is too dangerous for Japan to seek a rupture with the United States" given the nuclear threat from North Korea. (TN: The editorial actually says: "The threat of a nuclear North Korea makes Japan's neighborhood too dangerous, we think, for the government in Tokyo to seek a rupture with Washington or for the Obama administration to let one develop.")

To begin with, why are the North Korean missiles directed at the Japanese archipelago? North Korea and the United States still continue to confront each other across the 38th parallel. Technically the Korean War is not over yet, just in a ceasefire, so

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the large numbers of U.S. bases in Japan and South Korea are front-line bases against North Korea. That is probably why the missiles are directed at Japan.

The Washington Post editorial writer can evaluate the representative of the incoming (Japanese) administration any way he likes. Nevertheless, the respected American newspaper's editorial that seems to be designed to apply pressure on Japan has connotations of rousing up nationalism, and that, too, bothers me.

The presence of North Korea has been convenient for some lately. The view of regarding North Korea as a threat helps defuse criticism of U.S. bases (in Japan). The argument is also indispensable for upgrading the equipment of the Self-Defense Forces. The (North Korean threat) argument is now treated just like a banner for the public good. I want to see the argument lose its magical power quickly.

-- Harumi Kimura, 65, unemployed
Hachioji, Tokyo

(7) Specifics about national strategy bureau not in sight: SDP, PNP have questions about bureau's authority, role-sharing

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
September 9, 2009

Although coalition talks among the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP) are entering the final stage, specifics about the national strategy bureau, which will be the showcase of the new administration, have yet to be revealed. Some question whether the DPJ has really worked out the specifics of the bureau, although it advocated the bureau's establishment in its manifesto for the Lower House election.

A senior SDP official on Sept. 8 complained about the document, a single sheet of paper, describing the national strategy bureau plan provided by a senior DPJ official. "From this document I can get no idea of what it's about," the official said.

The document included a diagram of the relationships between the prime minister, each cabinet member, and the national strategy bureau under the new administration. This was a reply to a request from the SDP and the PNP for a briefing on the national strategy bureau. The two parties are worried that their presence in the planned coalition government might be eclipsed.

The document reportedly did not include any details, such as its composition, size, or specific duties.

What has been revealed until now about the national strategy bureau is that (1) it directly reports to the prime minister and is to consist of lawmakers and party personnel; (2) it is to draft a national vision for a new era and map out a budget framework under the initiative of politicians; and (3) DPJ Deputy Chairman Naoto Kan will take office as minister in charge.

Key points, such as role-sharing with the administrative renewal council and the cabinet ministerial committee to be newly established separately from the national strategy bureau, its authority over government agencies, and whether it will be responsible for foreign affairs and security, remain unclear.

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Government agencies are eager to know specifics about the envisaged bureau, because it is drawing much interest as a mechanism to enable politicians instead of bureaucrats to take the initiative in establishing ways to allocate tax revenues. However, details of actual duties assigned to the bureau are not in sight.

This is not due to the DPJ concealing specifics but due to its being unable to envisage a full-fledged image of the bureau. A senior DPJ member involved in the work of launching the bureau said, "We have an image, but the form of the bureau cannot be set before the overall picture of the administration is decided." This official explained that the work of deciding the details, such as how many of the five special advisors to the prime minister to assign to the bureau, etc., cannot be done unless the blueprint of the government as a whole is set. This situation will likely continue for some time to come.

In the meantime, in order to give the bureau a legal basis, it is necessary to pass legislation during the extraordinary Diet session to be convened in the fall. Since this cannot be done in time for the start of the new administration, the DPJ is now examining the idea of launching it as a national strategy office, whose status would be stipulated by government ordinance.

(8) Editorial: North Korea's nuclear weapons: 'Intimidation' will mean continuation of sanctions

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 5) (Full)
September 7, 2009

(The following translation was provided by the Open Source Center; it is filed as product number JPP20090907017001.)

We thought (North Korea) was actively seeking dialogue, but now it is unfolding tactics to stir things up. Seemingly, North Korea is calling for the removal of economic sanctions imposed on it by a UN Security Council resolution. But (what the DPRK is doing now) will rather bring adverse results. The DPRK has no choice but to move

toward giving up its nuclear weapons.

"We have reached the final stage after successfully conducting uranium enrichment tests." "The extracted plutonium is being turned into weapons."

North Korean representatives to the United Nations sent to the UN Security Council chairman a letter complaining about the economic sanctions. At the same time, North Korea highlighted its hard-line stance, saying, "We will have to take other hard-line measures if the United Nations continues to impose sanctions."

It was the first time North Korea had officially announced its success in uranium enrichment tests. The credibility of the announcement is uncertain, but North Korea's nuclear development runs counter to a UNSC resolution regarding a nuclear test conducted in May. It is extremely regrettable.

North Korea should understand that the economic sanctions will continue until it gives up its nuclear weapons. It should end the threat tactics and other adversarial attempts using nuclear materials.

The aim of the letter is to lift the economic sanctions and to seek

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dialogue with the United States. It may also be aimed at keeping the movement of Stephen Bosworth -- the US special representative for North Korean policy, who is on a round of visits to China, South Korea, and Japan for the resumption of the six-party talks -- in check.

By any measure North Korea has been busy on the diplomatic front. It has sought dialogue by inviting former U.S. President Clinton, a representative of a South Korean conglomerate, and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei to Pyongyang.

North Korea's neighboring countries are of the view that "it is not a fundamental change but a tactical move," according to South Korean Unification Minister Hyun In-taek. The United States has imposed an additional sanction against North Korean financial institutions. We have information that China is also practicing strict control over financial dealings -- buying and selling of the US dollar, in particular.

North Korea might have sent the letter while feeling frustration from such moves. But it is also proof that the economic sanctions are steadily having an effect.

North Korea is trying to restore its economy by promoting the "150-Day Battle," which will soon end, and General Secretary Kim Jong Il, who is in ill health, is faced with the issue of hereditary transfer of power. In both cases, the future is uncertain.

North Korea's various tactics are also aimed at creating discord among neighboring countries, who are virtually keeping in step with each other over the issue of making North Korea give up its nuclear weapons. We should not make light of communications among ourselves.

Incidentally, Japan is in the midst of regime transition. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which will take the helm of government, agrees that North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons or missiles is absolutely unacceptable. The DPJ treats North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens as a priority issue.

For the DPJ government it is crucial that there be a smooth handover of policy agenda from the previous administration. At the same time, the DPJ must pay extra attention -- after carrying out coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- to assure that cooperation with neighboring countries leaves nothing to be desired.

ROOS